



The 22nd Navajo Nation Council - Office of the Speaker

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NNC Delegate Walter Phelps Reports on Water Development Projects

Window Rock, AZ — On March 28, Navajo Nation Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Birdsprings, Leupp, Tolani Lake) announced an update on water development projects in the Grand Falls, Box Springs and Black Falls areas. The information was released from the Navajo Department of Water Resources (DWR).

"The DWR, in collaboration with the USEPA (United States Environmental Protection Agency), is making progress to provide adequate water service for the Cameron/Leupp/Tolani Lake communities," said Delegate Phelps. "Through the development of new wells, storage tanks and water lines we will ensure a cleaner water supply for the area's families and this will be an especially welcomed relief to those impacted by past uranium contamination"

One of the projects passed a milestone this week and has resulted in the delivery of water.

"As of today we have received five water hauling trucks and an equipment service truck. All trucks have been registered and we are in the process of hiring equipment operators and other staff required to fully implement the program," said Najam Tariq, DWR Director for Technical, Construction, and Operations.

The Safe Drinking Water Hauling Feasibility Study and Pilot Project was possible after DWR received \$2,640,000 from the USEPA to provide safe drinking water to residents in the Grand Falls, Box Springs and Black Falls area who do not have access to safe drinking water and have been hauling drinking water from unregulated livestock water.

To further consider the critical domestic water needs in the region, DWR also submitted a proposal to the USEPA through Indian Health Services (IHS) to drill two exploratory wells.

After the USEPA approved \$450,000 for drilling of the first exploratory well which is expected to be completed this year, the agency is willing to consider funding \$500,000 for a second exploratory well provided the water quality of the first well is good for human consumption.

It is hoped that this exploratory drilling will set up watering points for safe drinking water hauling and ultimately provide piped water to more than 150 area homes.

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